



DISCUSSION GUIDE

ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY

Presenter: Hilary Binder-Aviles, Independent NGO Consultant

Civic Leadership

Lesson Description

Community engagement is about involving the people you serve not just as beneficiaries of programs but as partners in accomplishing your mission. For an NGO to flourish, it must engage people from the community in identifying needs, developing projects and assessing results. Learn more about the ways your NGO can foster community engagement.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand what community engagement is and why it's important.
2. Become familiar with different ways an NGO can foster community engagement.
3. Learn the benefits and challenges of community engagement.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is involving members of the community — even those not being served — important for an NGO?
2. Think of a project that you are currently managing. What are different ways you might begin to involve community members in the project?

Developmental Actions

1. Think about the team you are managing. Conduct an assessment of the assets on your team to define what each person knows and what they know how to do. Identify practical ways you can use this information to be more efficient or effective.
2. Identify opportunities for community engagement at your NGO or an NGO you know and describe the benefits and challenges of greater engagement.

About the Video Presenter

Hilary Binder-Aviles is a leading American NGO development expert. She has 25 years of experience working with NGOs at all levels. She provides training and assistance in the areas of NGO startups, program/organizational planning and management, evaluation, governance, fundraising and advocacy. She previously worked for Mosaica: The Center for Nonprofit Development and Pluralism, and was co-founder and executive director of Sol & Soul, a grassroots NGO that used arts and culture as a tool for social change. Hilary has extensive experience working with citizens from around the world and has trained and facilitated planning for NGOs in Brunei, Egypt, Iraq, Singapore and Yemen. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Wellesley College and a master's in public policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Hilary is the lead author of *The NGO Handbook*, published by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs.

